

**ANIMAL  
RESCUE  
LEAGUE  
of BOSTON**



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**Animal Rescue League of Boston Featured in Newly Released Hill's Pet Nutrition  
2024 State of Shelter Pet Adoption Report**

*Report offers new data on key barriers to pet adoption and highlights insights and innovative solutions from animal welfare leaders*

**BOSTON, MA** – The Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) announces its participation in the newly released [2024 Hill's State of Shelter Pet Adoption Report](#). This data-rich report, released annually, highlights key leaders in the animal welfare industry and provides new insights around consumer attitudes and perceptions toward shelters and the animals in their care.

For the report, Hill's Pet Nutrition, a leading partner in animal welfare, surveyed a socioeconomically diverse group of 2,500 current and prospective pet owners to better understand what's driving the increase in shelter pets and decrease in pet adoption rates. Alongside the new findings, the [2024 Hill's Pet Nutrition State of Shelter Pet Adoption Report](#) highlights ARL President and CEO, Dr. Edward Schettino.

"The Animal Rescue League of Boston is proud to be featured in the 2024 *Hill's State of Shelter Pet Adoption Report*. The report sheds new light on adoption barriers that individuals in our community face every day," said Dr. Edward Schettino, ARL President and CEO. "The data allows us to better understand what pet parents need to make adoption more accessible. As a result, we're able to better serve our communities and the animals in our care."

ARL partners with Hill's Pet Nutrition's Food, Shelter and Love program to feed the animals in its care. Every animal cared for receives daily, high-quality nutrition to be happy, healthy and more adoptable.

"Collaborating with animal shelters to help end pet homelessness is crucial," said Dr. Karen Shenoy, US Chief Veterinary Officer at Hill's Pet Nutrition. "One way we do that is by supplying shelters with quality nutrition to help shelter pets be healthy, happy and more adoptable. Since 2002, the [Hill's Food, Shelter & Love](#) program has provided over \$300 million worth of Hill's brand pet foods to over 1,000 animal shelters, while also providing adoption kits to new pet parents."

## Key Findings

The following key findings from the *2024 Hill's State of Shelter Pet Adoption Report* will support ARL and others like it in creating even more meaningful, data-driven strategies for removing barriers to pet adoption and care.

Overall, Americans are open to adopting shelter pets, and younger generations are even more likely to adopt:

- 66% of people are likely to adopt shelter pets
- Of Gen Z and Millennials who've adopted a shelter pet before, 90% and 94% respectively are likely to adopt again
- Of Gen Z and Millennials who've never adopted a shelter pet, 75% and 77% respectively are likely to adopt

Pet adoption is less accessible for people making less than \$75,000, with overall concerns about the cost of pet ownership being a top barrier to adoption:

- 84% of respondents said veterinary care is the most expensive part of owning a pet
- Those making less than \$75,000 are more likely to surrender a pet due to financial difficulties and are more likely to say the cost of pet ownership exceeded their expectations
- Those making less than \$50,000 are more likely to have experienced at least one pet-related housing restriction and are more likely to say the cost of veterinary care impacts their decision to adopt

Respondents report being less likely to adopt large dogs than cats or small- to medium-sized dogs, which are believed to be easier and less expensive to manage:

- Fewer than 1 in 4 respondents report being likely to adopt a large dog:
  - 46% are likely to adopt a small dog
  - 45% are likely to adopt a medium dog
  - 39% are likely to adopt a cat
  - 24% are likely to adopt a large dog

- More than half of respondents who prefer a small or medium dog selected personal preference as the top reason; however, they also chose additional factors that deter them from adopting a large dog:
  - 27% say it's difficult to travel with large breed dogs
  - 26% say their housing doesn't allow large breed dogs
  - 25% say large breed dogs take up too much space

While survey respondents view fostering favorably, misperceptions about the costs and a fear of adopting the fostered pet may be limiting broader participation:

- 40% of prospective fosters are afraid of adopting their foster pet (there is no expectation for fosterers to adopt)
- 64% of prospective fosters say that if pet care costs were covered during the experience, they'd be likely to foster (fostering usually requires minimal financial investment, with many shelters providing the fosterer with all necessary supplies, including pet food)

Offering pet parents post-adoption support, especially behavior services, is a powerful tool to keeping more pets with their families:

- Respondents rated post-adoption behavioral services more likely to positively influence adoption (34%) than pre-adoption behavioral services (30%)
- Of respondents who experienced post-adoption anxiety, 46% said behavioral issues were the top driving force
- Of individuals who had relinquished a pet, 24% said behavioral/training issues were the top reason for surrendering
- 94% of pet owners considering relinquishment kept their pet after receiving support

“Although the *Hill's State of Shelter Pet Adoption Report* identifies genuine and concerning barriers, the hope is that it serves as a springboard for opportunity,” Dr. Shenoy said. “By working hand-in-hand with individuals and organizations in the animal welfare community, the data will guide us toward meaningful initiatives that will help more shelter pets find loving families.”

For more information about ARL's feature in the 2024 *Hill's Pet Nutrition State of Shelter Pet Adoption Report* and Hill's commitment to animal welfare, please visit [www.hillspet.com/shelter](http://www.hillspet.com/shelter).

#### **ABOUT THE ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF BOSTON:**

***The Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) is an unwavering champion for animals in need, committed to keeping them safe and healthy in habitats and homes.*** Founded in 1899, ARL provides high-quality veterinary care, adoption, and rescue services; while also confronting the root causes of animal cruelty and neglect through innovative community programs, police investigations, and public advocacy. In 2023, ARL served 20,964 animals throughout Massachusetts. ARL is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. The Animal Rescue League of Boston does not

receive government grants or public funding and relies on the generosity of our supporters to help animals in need. For more information please visit us online at [arlboston.org](http://arlboston.org); and be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).

**About Hill's Pet Nutrition:**

Founded more than 75 years ago, Hill's Pet Nutrition has been committed to providing pets with the best nutrition through extensive research and a scientific understanding of their specific needs. Their team of 220+ veterinarians, PhD nutritionists, and food scientists constantly strive to develop innovative solutions for pet health. Hill's offers a full line of products, including their Prescription Diet therapeutic nutrition and Science Diet wellness products, which are available at veterinary clinics and pet specialty retailers worldwide. For more information about their products and nutritional philosophy, please visit [HillsPet.com](http://HillsPet.com).

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